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REAL OUT-of-DOOR STORIES

Written by
CLARA J. DENTON



Illustrated by Vera Stone
Real bird insect and animal stories



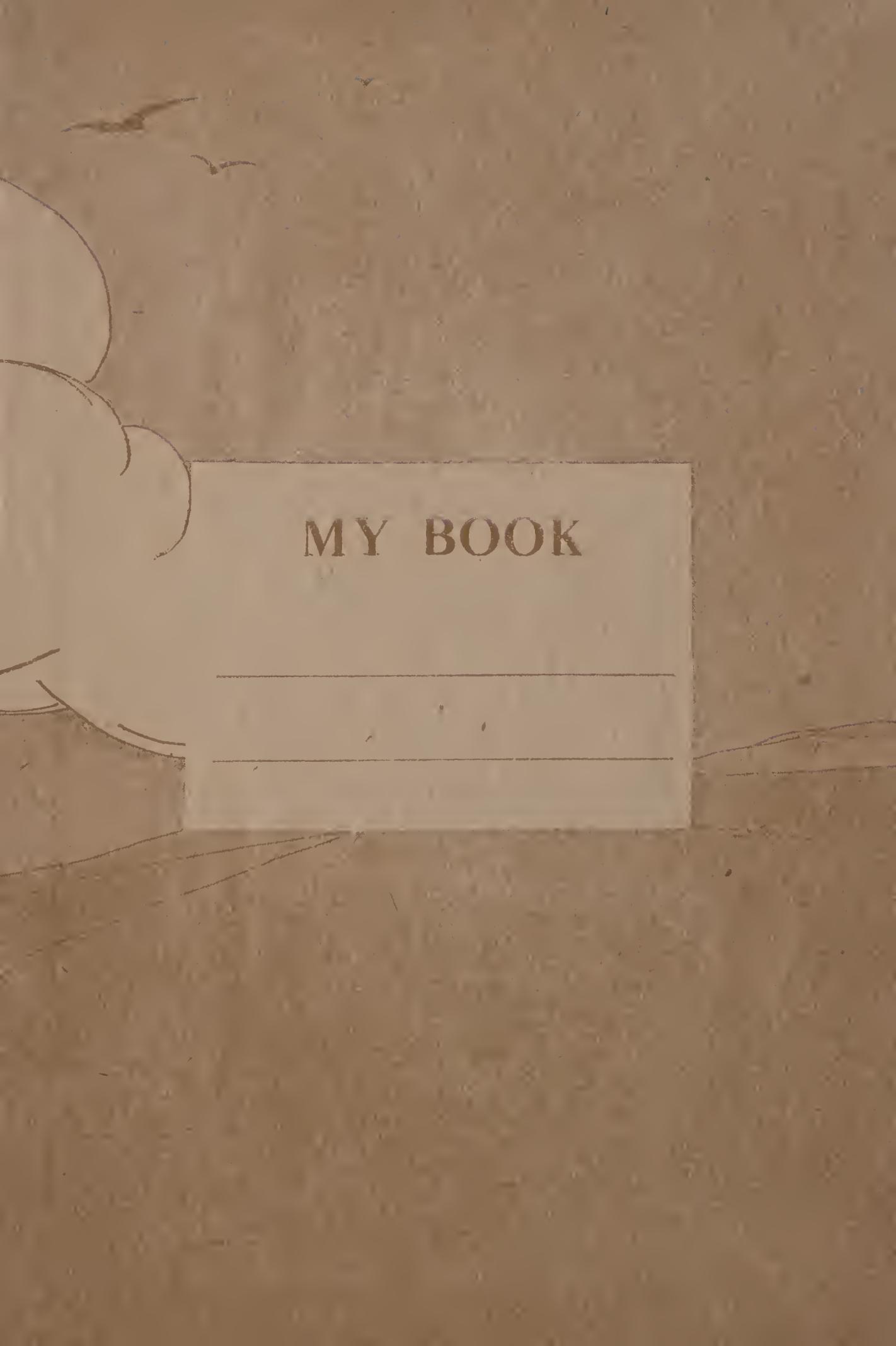
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REAL OUT-of-DOOR STORIES

Real stories of birds, insects and animals

Written by CLARA J. DENTON

Illustrated by
VERA STONE



"A JUST RIGHT BOOK"

Published by

ALBERT WHITMAN COMPANY
CHICAGO U.S.A.

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REAL OUT-OF-DOOR STORIES

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FOREWORD

These stories by Clara J. Denton, the well known writer for children, are something new and unusual in the way of stories for the little folks. They give us real stories of the real doings of live creatures. A class of reading for children which is altogether too uncommon. They are not fairy stories, nor imaginary deeds of imaginary animals, although often even more wonderful than fairy tales, but they recount actual happenings, and in many cases portray unsuspected capabilities in ordinary every day birds, animals and insects. Give them to the children who are persistently asking for "stories about things which really happened," and you will not be disappointed in the children's assimilation of the stories, nor in the wholesome morals which the little ones will unconsciously absorb.

Unlike many stories of this character, they are all vouched for by the author, who has ever been an observer of all living creatures, and has never lost an opportunity to record facts which she has seen with her own observing eyes.

The book should find a place in every home and school library, where it is certain to meet a warm welcome.

There are no dry and uninteresting details in the pages, but everything is told in a bright and attractive manner.

NOTE

The true stories in this book collection, Real Out-of-Door Stories, which have appeared in print before are here used by permission of the original publisher, and thanks is given to each publication, as follows:

The Christian for, "Work for Neighbors," "Grip," "A Queer Luncheon," "Hole in the Flower Bed;" The Normal Instructor for, "The Brave Little Hens," "The Cat and Squirrel;" The Epworth Herald for, "Just Like Folks," "The Advocate," "Cat and Blue Jays," "Glo and the Bees," "Porky;" The Child's Gem for, "The Ants Told," "A Warm Breakfast;" Jewel's Magazine for, "Robbers," "Tom, the Pet Crow," "Their Summer Home," "The Trap," "What the Wind Did;" Rural Schoolteacher for, "The Weasel and Chipmunk;" Progressive Teacher for, "What Happened;" Kings Own for, "In a Glass Box;" New York Churchman for, "The Chipmunks in School."

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Mrs. Wren Was Close Behind Him

Real Out-of-Door Stories

THE CHIPMUNKS IN SCHOOL

IT was a little log schoolhouse in the woods and there were only six children in the school, but they were sweet and bright and the young teacher was very happy with them. She had never taught school in a place like that before, in fact she had always lived in a large city, and she thought it queer and funny to "teach school in the woods." One day at the noon

recess the children went off to pick wild flowers, and the teacher sat all alone in the school-house reading.

In the midst of the quiet she thought that she heard a sound which was not the breeze stirring the leaves out of doors, and strangest of all the sound seemed right in the school-house. Her first thought was "a mouse," but as she was not afraid of a mouse she did not scream, nor jump on a chair, as the girls do in stories; she just raised her eyes from the book and without moving at all, she looked around the room. What do you suppose she saw?

Down on the floor in front of the bench where the children had sat to eat their luncheons, was a little red chipmunk, sitting up on his haunches and holding in his funny black paws a crumb of bread, at which he was nibbling as if he thought it was the finest dainty in the world.

His bright black eyes were fixed on the teacher, and she knew that if she stirred even the least little bit he would scamper off, so she almost held her breath. Pretty soon she saw another reddish head rise over the window sill. The round black nose sniffed the air a moment as if to ask, “Is it all safe?” Then hearing no dangerous sound, the little fellow scampered through the open window, and came to its mate on the floor, all the while, however, keeping its eye on the quiet teacher. What a merry feast they had—and when they had eaten up all the crumbs as clean as you could have swept them with a broom, away they scampered again.

After that day the teacher spent no more of her recesses reading under the trees, as she had sometimes done, but sat out the time in the quiet schoolhouse watching her friends, the chipmunks. She was careful to sprinkle each day, some extra crumbs in front of the

bench where they were in the habit of coming. After awhile she sprinkled some crumbs near her own desk, to tempt them closer to her. It



did not take the chipmunks long to learn that the teacher was truly their friend and when they had grown so tame that they would come

up and eat out of her fingers she decided to tell the children about them. So, one warm day, when the children were tired and restless, she said to them, "Now put up your books, sit very still and I will tell you a pretty story which I promise you shall be true."

She began by asking how many children had ever seen a chipmunk. Of course every hand went up, for all country children know the lively, little chipmunk. Then she told them about some chipmunks coming into a schoolhouse where a teacher was sitting all alone. She had to answer a great many questions about this part of the story and when she had finished, she added, smiling, "Now, children, the best part of this story is, that I am the teacher I have been telling you about, and this is the schoolhouse where the chipmunks come every day when you are out at play."

This part of the story delighted the children more than ever, and in a moment she added,

“Do you know, I think that if we sit perfectly quiet, the chipmunks will come in at the window and run up to my desk. I have some kernels of corn in my hand and I think if we are perfectly quiet, they will eat out of my fingers, but if you make the slightest sound they will scamper off like two flashes.”

So they all settled down to quiet waiting. It was pretty hard for some of the restless ones, but they were all so anxious for the wonderful sight, that they held themselves still for more than five minutes, which seemed to them at least an hour. All eyes were fixed on the window. At last a black, little nose was sticking up over the window sill. How still everybody was; the teacher thought she could almost hear the children’s hearts beat. The pretty little visitor watchfully halted on the edge of the window sill, sat up on his slim, little haunches, sniffed and looked around as if it was thinking, “Well, I never! What does this

mean? Boys and girls, as true as I'm a chipmunk! Boys throw stones and girls chase like everything, but these are so quiet, it can't be that they are real boys and girls." Then his eyes fell on the yellow kernels in the teacher's fingers and like a flash he scurried along and jumped to the floor. In another moment there was a scraping sound along a log, and lo! there was the other chipmunk, sitting up beside its mate and nibbling at another kernel of corn. This wonderful sight was too much for one little fellow and he gave a long, delighted "O-o-o!" Well, at that, you ought to have seen those eight nimble feet scurry along the log, and before the children could wink the pretty visitors were gone..

But this was not their last visit, and the children, through always hoping for their appearance, became the quietest and the most orderly pupils in the whole country. They learned to move silently, to speak softly, to study without

moving their lips, to lay down their books and other belongings noiselessly and not to whisper to each other.

In fact I do believe that they made the least noise of any other six children who ever lived. It became a fixed habit with them too, and every one who visited the school praised the teacher for her quiet pupils. Then she would tell this story, which I know is true, for I was there to see it.





*And Then Taking Him into Her Hand She Turned His Head
Toward Home*

NED

HE was a pet pigeon, who followed his mistress everywhere, but would not let his master touch him, or even come near him. There was good reason for this fear of his master, for he was a travelling salesman and was at home on Sundays only.

Ned was so determined to follow his mistress everywhere that when she went away from home, she always caught him and shut him up in his cage.

One warm Sunday morning in June, as she came out upon the porch she said to her husband,

“Do you know where Ned is? I must shut him up before I go to church.”

“No,” was the answer, “but as he is nowhere in sight, he will not know when you go. I hate to see him shut up.”

So the mistress went on her way. She had gone but half a block when she heard a whirring sound and the next moment Ned lit on her shoulder.

She scolded him, and then taking him in her hand she turned his head toward home and then tossed him into the air as high as she could throw him. Then she went on, almost running, and soon turned the corner.

“Now,” she said to herself, “Mr. Ned cannot find me.”

She was in such great haste that she did not stop to look behind her, but hurried into the church and took her seat.

She thought she was pretty clever to get away from Ned in this way, but presently someone opened the church door; then she heard the whir of wings and there was Ned on her shoulder again!

This time she carried him home, fully intending to shut him up.

But when her husband heard what she meant to do, he begged her to let the poor bird go.

“Well,” she said impatiently, “there is only one way to keep him from following me, and that is for you to come with me, and that too, is the only thing which will keep me from shutting him up. Hurry now, for there goes the last bell.”

So the good husband put on his hat and went along to church with his wife, while the pigeon sat on the porch-railing and looked after them as if he knew that he had forced the man of the house to go to church with his wife. Isn’t it a pity there are not more pigeons like Ned?



Buster Ran Back to His Dish

NEIGHBORS

NOODLES and Buster had been neighbors for two years, and although they were very friendly, they showed that they were jealous of each other. One day when Noodles' mistress gave him his dinner of potatoes and

gravy, he smelled it all over and then walked away with an offended air. He thought it was not good enough because there was no meat mixed with the potatoes and gravy. Then his mistress said, "All right, I'll give it to Buster," and she set the plate out on the back porch. Noodles ran after her and immediately ate up every bit of the dinner. Noodles' mistress told Buster's mistress about this, and the next time Buster turned away from his food she said, "All right, Noodles shall have it," and it was placed on the back porch. Then what do you think happened? Buster ran back to his dish and ate up every crumb, even licking the dish. You see, each dog knew the other's name as well as he knew his own, and when the victuals were on the back porch, each knew the other could get it if he wanted to. Dogs are almost as queer as people sometimes, aren't they?

THE GUARDIAN

THERE was a great commotion in the low nest beside the big stump, and well there might be, for coming across the meadow with banners flying and drums beating was an army of boys and girls.

“Come, come,” called Father Meadow Lark, “Come away, don’t you see what is near us? They can only destroy the nest and we can build another and you can lay more eggs, but if you stay around here they’ll surely kill you. Come, I say.” And he made sure of his own neck by flying into the nearest tree.

Mother Meadow Lark was indeed loath to leave her beautiful eggs and she stayed by them just as long as she dared, but presently the tramping feet seemed so near and the drums sounded so loud that her poor little bird

heart beat with fear and she flew into the tree with her mate, leaving the cosy home with its four beautiful eggs to its fate.

Then from their perch on the limb of the tree they saw a little boy dart out from among the children and take his stand close to the nest. The line of march was headed directly for the same spot, but the guardian of the tiny home called out,

“Go back, go back, go on the other side of the stump, you mustn’t come on this side.”

The teachers heard the command, and, half suspecting the cause of it, bade the line obey the small captain’s orders.

The beautiful pageant marched on to the farther side of the meadow, there merry songs were sung, recitations and other amusements given, but through all the display the little guardian stood by the home which he had taken into his keeping. Crowds of people were passing through the meadow to behold the merry play of the children, and the danger

to the nest was, indeed, very great. There is no doubt it would have been destroyed by the sight-seers had it been left to take its chances.



Go Back! Go Back!

So the little boy lost the whole of the bright May-day pageant and stood faithfully beside the stump where the bird's nest was, until the last merry-maker had left the meadow. Then he withdrew a little way and watched the

mother-bird settle down contentedly upon her nest while her mate lit upon the stump and sang a song of gratitude for the saving of their home.

I am glad to tell that this is no fancy sketch, but the account of a real deed of a real live boy. I hope he will never in his whole life be without a happy home. He certainly deserves one, you will say, and so say I, for it is a noble thing to guard a home whether it be of bird, beast, insect or man.



TOM, THE PET CROW

TOM was a pet crow as black as the stove. He stole all the bright things which he could lay hold of with his strong bill. Back of the house where he lived, there stood an old pump made of wood. It was not in a well, as most pumps are, but stood flat on the grass. Its top was off, so Tom would take the things which he stole and drop them down this place which he seemed to think he owned.

The boys and girls had often watched him, and all his tricks were well known, so when things could not be found someone would call out,

“Go look in Tom’s pump.”

Then, with a pair of tongs, all the things in the old pump would be fished out. This was



*Then with a Pair of Tongs All the Things in the Old Pump Would Be
Fished Out*

great fun for the boys and girls, but Tom would perch near by and call out, "Caw, caw," as if he wished they would go off and let his things alone.

One day there came to the farm a strange man with a horse and cart. He stopped at the gate and talked to the man who owned Tom.

"Now," said the stranger, "I will get my lunch and eat while I talk to you to save time." He took his lunch out of the cart and leaned on one of the wheels while he talked. He held a big piece of pie in his right hand and a piece of cheese in his left hand. But, O dear! just as he went to take a bite of the cheese, whiz! out of a tree near by, flew Tom and caught the cheese out of his hand. The man, of course, gave a cry, but Tom was off like a black streak and did not stop until he was safe in the top of a tall oak tree.

They all called to Tom, but he stayed in the top of the tree till the cheese was all gone, then

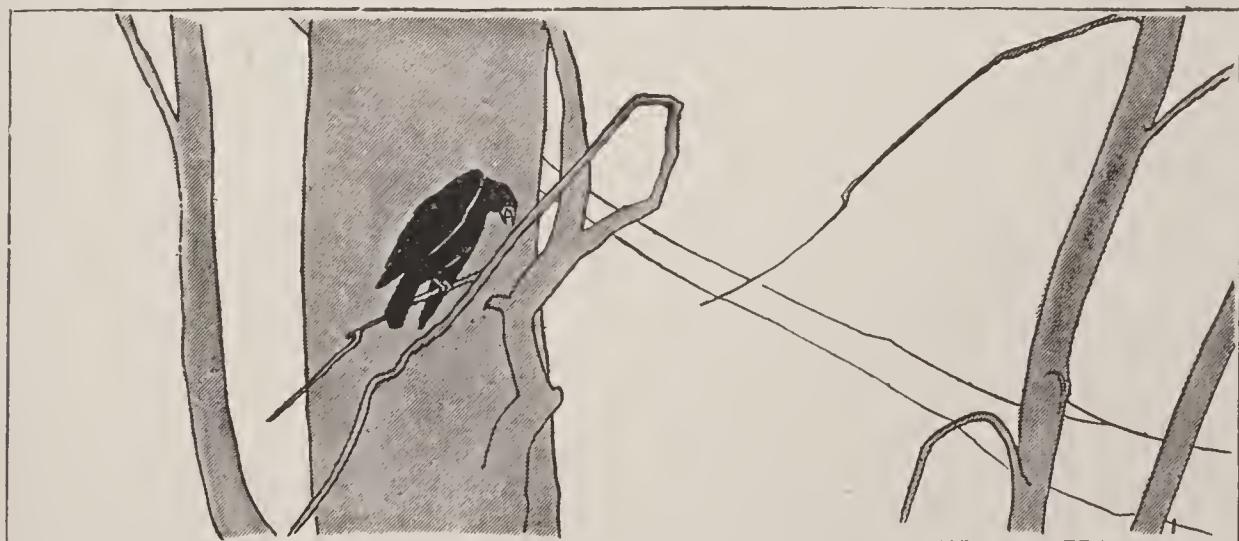
he screamed “Caw, caw!” and flew off to the barn.

“Come and have a nice warm meal with us,” said the man who owned Tom.

“No, I have not time,” said the man, “but I have learned this much, not to hold cheese in my hand when there is a pet crow near by,” and then, with a laugh, the man climbed into his cart and drove on.

You see, he was the kind of man who makes the best of things.

Do you think you could laugh if you had lost a part of your lunch?



GLO AND THE BEES

“THE bees are swarming! The bees are swarming!” Everybody ran, the hired man to get the empty hive for the new home, to get his gloves and veil so that the bees couldn’t sting him, and the mother to get a sheet to spread on the ground so that they could see when the bees fell.

Leona and Franklin to get tin pans and big spoons to make a noise to drown the hum of the Queen bee if she took a notion to wander off, and little Glo for no other reason than that she wanted to see what was going on.

Bees, you must know, are wiser in some ways than are some people. Many times when people are much crowded in a house they keep right on living in that unpleasant manner, but

bees are wiser, as soon as they are crowded they move out or, as we call it, swarm.

So this is what the bees were doing at this time. Everybody stood under the apple tree waiting for the bees to light somewhere.



Everybody Ran

Glo stood at a little distance because she was afraid of the bees. She had been stung once by one and she thought they were good things

to keep away from. As it was early in the morning, her long yellow curls had not been combed, but hung over her shoulders in a shining mass, which the sun shone on so that it looked like a pot of gold. Suddenly, what do you think those foolish bees did? They made one swoop in a big black mass and down they came upon Glo's bright head.

What would you have done if you had been in her place? Run away, or jumped up and down and screamed and so frightened the bees that they would have stung you to death?

Glo didn't really have time to do either of these things, because her mother called in her clear, decided voice,

“Glo, don't you dare to move, stand perfectly still and the bees will not hurt you.”

This was excellent advice, but if Glo had been like some children I have seen who don't know what it means to really obey, but always do the very thing they are told not to do, we do not like to think of what might have happened.

But Glo did exactly what her mother said and stood as still and straight as an iron post. Then the hired man ran to Glo with the empty hive and quickly brushed the bees into it, so that not one of them stung Glo. And this was what came because a little girl knew how to mind her mother.



A QUEER LUNCHEON

EVERYBODY knows that goats eat paper, and some of you may have seen them do it. Once at the Toronto Zoo, where an elephant was chained to a post out of doors, I saw him eat a newspaper, but today something happened which seemed even queerer than this.

A large dray drawn by two fat mules drew up in front of a hotel which the driver entered after hitching his team. Presently he came out carrying in his hand an open newspaper, which he held close to the mouth of one of the mules. The mule eagerly grabbed it and began to chew it, rolling his eyes about as though he were having a feast. The team stood in front of the hotel for some time, while the driver loaded the dray with the big trunks on

the sidewalk, so that I had several minutes in which to watch the mules. By the time the trunks were all loaded on the dray the newspaper was chewed up and disappeared. As a newspaper was given to only one of the mules it was very plain that the other mule was not fond of printed matter.



THE BRAVE LITTLE WRENS

JENNY WREN stood on the porch of her small brown house and looked around. How good it seemed to breathe the fresh summer air again and to know that her time for sitting on the tiny eggs was over.

“But I’ll have to work now,” she chirped softly to herself, “for those wee babies are great eaters.”

She was about to spread her wings, when, at that moment, she saw a dreadful creature coming up the trunk of the home tree. Instantly forgetting the long flight that she had intended to take the brave little mother darted at the terrible monster and gave it a sharp peck on the head.

Then the saucy visitor, whose name was Mr.

Red Squirrel, went scurrying down the tree trunk faster than he had gone up, but Mrs. Wren was close behind him. He scampered across the lawn and, although his little feet twinkled fast, Mrs. Jenny's wings were more than a match for them, and now and then, she managed to give him a sharp peck on the head.

Presently they passed under a tree where Mr. Wren sat preening his feathers and, though he dearly loved to make his toilet, he loved a good fight even better and so, he at once joined in the chase.

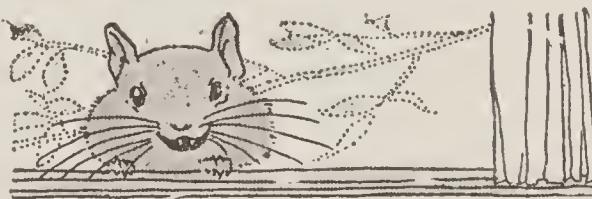
Poor Mr. Red Squirrel, there is no telling what might have become of him had he not suddenly espied a hole in a stump and into that he ran so quickly that the wrens could not see where he had gone. They knew that he was no longer there, however, and Mr. Wren flew into the nearest tree and sang his very best concert solo.

Do you suppose that Mr. Red Squirrel repeated the call on Mrs. Wren? Indeed he did

not and I think he must have warned all his friends to stay away from the wren's tree, for they passed the rest of the summer very quietly.

You didn't know that the wrens were such fighters?

Well, next summer if you will nail some boxes up against the trees the wrens will come and make their homes with you and then, perhaps, you will see them chase a red squirrel, just as I did.



WHAT THE WIND DID

IT was high noon at the Zoo, and the sun was hot enough to suit even the African elephant. He was chained in an open pen with a bundle of hay in front of him, and over his head was a sign on which was painted in large letters,

Do Not Feed the Elephant

The polar bear was also in an open pen, but in the center was a large pool of water into which a fountain played all the while and in this pool the bear spent most of his time. Every five minutes he would hold his open mouth under the fountain and let the cool stream trickle down his throat, much to the delight of the people on the other side of his fence. In a wide inclosure near by, a pair of

zebras trotted happily up and down, and within speaking distance a cage full of monkeys chattered.

Everywhere was that same annoying sign beginning, “Don’t feed the —” to the great sorrow of the small boy, who had come to the Zoo with his pockets bursting with candy and peanuts. The merry south wind, however, did not heed this warning. In the first place winds can’t read, in the second place there has never yet been found a way to stop the wind from blowing “where it listeth.” So the merry south wind found a large newspaper, one of those immense dailies which the cities turn out every morning, and what did this lawless wind do, but pick it up and whirl it about. Up one street and down another, over fences and low buildings until he laid the paper right at the feet of the elephant.

“Don’t feed the elephant,” said the sign, but the south wind didn’t know that and if he had he might have answered, “Elephants don’t

eat newspapers, especially when a big bundle of sweet clover hay lies right in front of them. If it were a goat now, it would be different; he might eat a whole library, but a self-respecting



elephant to eat even one little bit of a newspaper? O no, never!"

Then, what do you suppose happened? The elephant reached out his big handy trunk,

picked up a section of that paper, put it into his mouth and swallowed it, then another big section followed the first one, and so he kept on until not a scrap of that great paper was left!

Think of all that news going down an elephant's throat!

So, you see, the south wind had broken the rule of the Zoo, he had fed the elephant.

This did not trouble the wind, however, he blew along on his merry way, caring as little about the broken rule as he did about the poor elephant's digestion. Do you wonder that we say, "As free as the winds?"

THE ANTS TOLD

“WHAT in the world are you doing there?” asked a little black bug that was nestling close



The Little Girl Stooped Low Down Over the Ant Hill

to the edge of a big stone. “The air is so cold and damp this morning, I should think you

would want to run into your warm nest so as to be out of the way when the rain begins."

"But," said the little brown ant to whom the bug had spoken, "it isn't going to rain." "How can you say that when the big black clouds are hanging all over the sky?" asked the bug.

"No matter about the clouds," said the ant, "it will not rain today." "How can you be so sure?" asked the bug, and then he added after a minute, "but then you are only a poor little ant and of course you can't be expected to know very much about rain or anything else."

"Maybe not," said the little ant, "but I do know that the rain is not coming today. If it were going to rain you would not see any of the ants working. It looks very cloudy I know but by and by the sun will shine out brightly, and that is why we are all working so busily."

"Well," said the little bug, "you think you are very wise, but I don't see how you can be so sure."

"Really I don't know myself, but I know that I am sure, and that is about all that I know about it."

"But suppose it should rain, then what will you think?" "It will be time enough to talk about that when the rain begins," was the little ant's wise answer.

After a while the bug came running to the ant very much frightened.

"O see," it said, "there comes one of those dreadful creatures who stand up straight and run around on two feet. Now it will stamp on your nest and maybe kill every one of you. I'm going to get out of its way as soon as ever I can," and the little bug started to run off as fast as it could go.

"O come back," called the ant, "I know all about that creature, it will not hurt either of us, it comes out here every morning to see what the weather is to be, so now if you will listen very carefully you will find out something about what useful creatures we ants are."

“O, pshaw!” was the answer with a real bug laugh, “I am sure I know just as much now as I ever shall know,” but he didn’t run away as he had started to do but came close to the ant that he might not miss anything which was likely to happen.

Presently he saw the “creature” who was only a harmless little girl come quite near the ant’s nest.

“Now,” he said, “look out, Miss Ant, you’ll be hurt in a minute or two.” But the ant only ran around after another grain of sand to carry into the nest. Then the little girl stooped low down over the ant’s nest and the bug held its breath expecting something dreadful to happen, but in another minute the little girl jumped up and said,

“No, mama, it isn’t going to rain, the ants are all working.” “Well, after all,” said the bug, “it’s a great thing to be an ant and so to be able to teach something to the wise human beings.”

IN A GLASS BOX

PERHAPS you may have heard of the wise old Greek called Diogenes, who when asked by King Alexander if he could do any thing for him, replied “Yes; get out of my sunlight.”

I cannot take the time here to tell you about this gruff old fellow, perhaps your teacher will do that for you, but I want to tell you about another Diogenes. He is not so wise as the old Greek, perhaps, but he is quite as fond of the sunlight, indeed, that is the reason for his name.

He has no way of letting us know just how wise he is, for he is only a brown chameleon which was brought from South Carolina and given to a little boy for a plaything. He lives in a glass box which has been his home for two

years and in that time he has become very tame. He is often taken out of his box and allowed to run over the plants in the window garden. This he seems to enjoy very much.

You have, no doubt, heard it said that the chameleon changes his color with whatever he touches, but this is not true of this one from South Carolina. He does change his color, it is true, but only when he is either much pleased about something, or badly frightened, or moved from sunlight to shade. He takes on the most beautiful shades of blue and green and sparkles like diamonds when enjoying a sun bath. When any member of the family with whom he lives, looks at him or touches him he does not change at all, but if a stranger comes to his glass house and studies him he pants in a frightened way and changes color at once. However, he will gaze steadily at the stranger with his jewel-like eyes, instead of hiding his head in a corner of the box, which shows he is not a coward.



Allowed to Run Over the Plants

The chameleon's web feet are like leaves in shape and he can walk up the sides of his glass house just as a fly does.

He passes his time either sleeping behind some coarse, curly hair in one corner of his box, which his little master calls his "lair," or basking in the sunlight, or playing with his shadow on the side of the glass box which is next to the wall.

In the summer he lives high on the live flies which are brought to him, and you should see him catch one of these. When the live fly is put into his box he will half open his eyes, move his head from side to side as if measuring the distance and then with one swift dash he seizes the poor fly. No one has ever seen him miss one. In the winter he lives almost wholly on sugar, with now and then a fat spider, which must be brought to him alive like the flies. He pays no attention whatever to a dead insect.

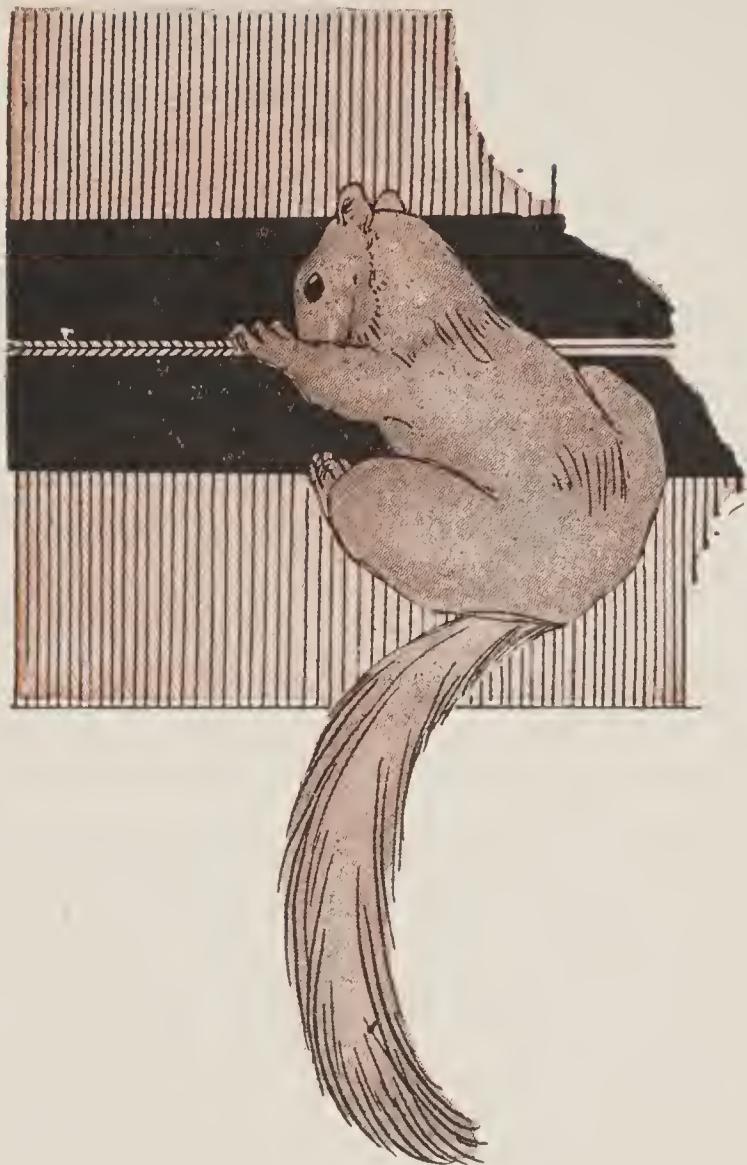
About once in three months the chameleon

has a new suit, that is he slips off his old one and shows a new one beneath. What do you suppose he does with his old suit?

He doesn't have to hunt up a rummage sale to be rid of it, nor does he need to hail a tin peddler and trade it off for kitchen ware. No, he simply gathers it up and swallows it.

One wintry day, just as he was about to make a luncheon in this way, his young master reached into the box and took his skin away from him, in order that he might look at it under the microscope.

I thought that was rather shabby treatment, because it really does seem as if any creature, however small, ought to have a right to do as he likes with his own skin. Don't you think so too?



Pushed Up One of the Slats

ROBBERS

MR. and Mrs. Red Squirrel sat in front of their cozy home and talked the matter over seriously: there was a great scarcity of nuts that fall and starvation seemed to be staring them in the face.

"It's boys," said Mr. Red Squirrel, "and I'm going hunting, and if I find a tree full of nuts I'll come back after you."

With a whisk of his bushy tail he scampered down the tree-trunk and was soon out of sight.

He went on and on, jumping from tree to tree, until by and by he was out of the forest. It was a bright moonlit night and, as far as Mr. Red Squirrel's eyes could reach, he could see only well-tilled fields and high rail fences, so he jumped on the top of the nearest fence.

"Pretty good of them," he thought, "to build this nice dry road for me to run on."

He ran on again along the fence rail for a long time. Suddenly he sat up, eagerly sniffing the cool night air.

He turned his little body around and scanned every thing in sight. Just ahead of him a large, white house stood out in the moonlight, and his keen little nose told him that somewhere near it, nuts were hidden.

He ran on again, following where his sharp-

scented nose told him to go. Pretty soon he was under a window which had slat shutters over it and there the sweet smell was stronger than ever.

Mr. Red Squirrel ran up the water spout, jumped on the shutter, pushed up one of the slats with his deft little paw and then crawled through the narrow opening. Ah, how strong was the delicious smell which he knew and loved so well. He jumped to the floor and scurried over to a large closet, the door of which stood open, and there, spread out on the floor, were nuts enough to keep himself and his family fat all winter.

“Boys,” he scolded aloud, “so this is where they’ve stored the good food they’ve stolen from us. Well, turn about is fair play, and now we’ll steal it back again. I wonder what they’ll think of that?”

The squirrel went home at his very best pace, you may be sure, and all night long and

for two or three nights thereafter, he and his wife were a very busy pair of red squirrels.

It was many days after this that the people who lived in the big, white house decided that they would have some walnuts to eat. One of the boys took a little basket and went upstairs after them, but he returned with a frightened face.

“Not a single nut up there,” he said.

“Oh, you must be mistaken,” said his brother; “nothing could get in there where those nuts were.”

“Well, they have gotten in there,” said the other boy. “I tell you there is not a nut left.”

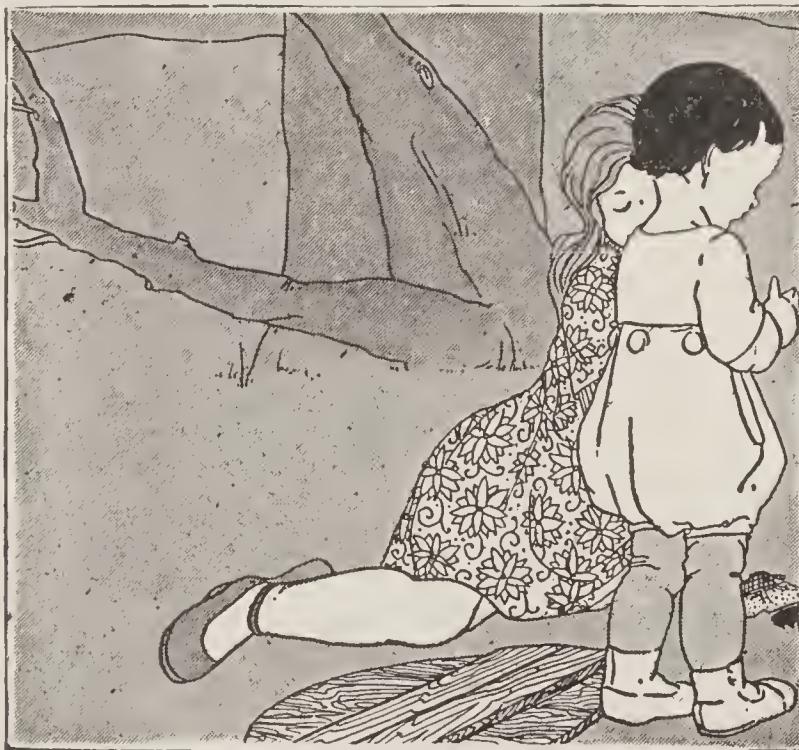
So the whole family, full of curiosity, went upstairs to look in the closet.

“They must have been queer robbers,” said one of the brothers.

“So they were, and very small ones too,” said his father, pointing to some tiny tracks on the shutters.

"Oh," said the boy, "I saw those little marks, but I didn't suppose that they meant anything."

"But you see now, that they do," said the father, "and the next time that you store nuts don't leave the window open, because, as you have found out to your sorrow, a red squirrel can crawl through a very small hole."



THE HOLE IN THE FLOWER-BED

ONE of the tiny yellow chickens was missing. The old hen clucked away just as happily to the nineteen that were left. She did not know there was one lost, because, you see, she could not count. The mistress could, however, and as she stood scattering the meal over the ground she counted the little flock over and over, but every time there were nineteen and no more.

The next morning, sad to tell, there were only eighteen chickens, and the next morning only seventeen.

“This will never do,” said the mistress of the chickens. “The mother hen and her babies must be shut up to keep them away from the

hawk and the rats which are eating up the chicks."

In the same yard, running about wherever he pleased, was a smart little dog of the kind known as a rat terrier. Because he was such a tiny fellow he was called "Noodles."

A few days after the loss of the chickens Noodles followed his master into the barn. Suddenly there was a swift pounce in one of the corners, and, as his master turned quickly, he saw the tiny dog standing there with a big rat in his mouth, which he killed with one fierce shake. Before his master could either speak or move, off ran Noodles with the rat still in his mouth to the big flower-bed and began digging a hole in the soft earth.

The master watching from the barn door saw little Noodles push the dead rat into the hole and then cover it over, leaving the tail sticking out, however, for it was a big rat, more than half as big as Noodles himself.

"I must bury the rat deeper than that," said

the master, going to the barn after the shovel.

When he came back to the place in the flower-bed and began digging a deeper hole in which to put the rat, what do you suppose he found?



But Every Time There Were Nineteen and No More

There was the twentieth little chicken that had been missing and the nineteenth and the eighteenth.

You see Noodles had made of this hole in the flower-bed a sort of grave-yard; he hadn't tried to eat them any more than he had the rat.

And how do you suppose he had been able to get them out of the big coop in which they were penned? He had gone close up to the boards, dug a way under them with his two little paws, until he had made a good-sized hole, then he would sit down by that hole and patiently wait and when the chicken came out, quickly he would grab it—and that was the end of the little chicken.

So, after they had found out his bad tricks Noodles was shut out of the beautiful back yard, because they knew that it was he who had killed the chickens and not a hawk or a rat.

I am sure you will be glad to know that there were not any more missing chickens. But wasn't it too bad that Noodles had to be shut out of the green and shady back yard?

THROUGH THE KNOT-HOLE

MABEL was sitting on the back porch stringing beads. A few feet away from her was a high board fence and when she looked up suddenly from her work her eyes fell upon a large knot-hole in the fence.

“Why,” she exclaimed, half aloud, “what a beautiful red flower; I wonder how it ever came there?”

She knew there was a bed of caraway on the other side of the fence just where the knot-hole was, but she knew also that the red blossom did not belong to the caraway. Then she made up her mind that she would see what it was. So she ran on down the garden, pushed open the gate, and was soon where the caraway was, but the pretty red flower was nowhere to be seen.

"Shoo!" she said to the old Plymouth Rock rooster and his flock of hens who were scratching away near the caraway bed, "I just believe you have dug up my pretty red flower."

She looked all around very carefully but



Put Her Eye to the Knot-hole

she could find no trace of anything which looked at all like a red flower, so she went slowly back to her seat on the porch.

She sat down again and began her pleasant task of stringing beads. By and by she looked

up from her work, and then a strange thing happened again. Her eye fell on the beautiful flower waving about in the air just as it had done before. She didn't wait to go to the gate this time but ran straight to the knot-hole and put her eye close to it.

What do you suppose she saw?

Stop a minute to think and see if you can guess, then read this to your mother and see if she can tell.

"Now," you will say to yourself, "the title of this book says that it is stories about birds, insects and animals, and this one is only about a flower." But wait until you read on a little farther.

What Mabel saw when she looked through the knot-hole was the speckled neck of the Plymouth Rock rooster just reaching above the caraway, and on the end of his neck were his big red wattles and his heavy red comb. When looking through the knot-hole from a distance, as Mabel had done at first, the

rooster's neck was not visible and the comb and wattles looked, as he turned his head about, exactly like a large, red flower waving in the air.

So, after all, this is a story about a bird, for a rooster is a bird, isn't it?





Too Proud to Follow Them

A WARM BREAKFAST

THERE was once a foolish little sparrow that thought he could take such good care of himself that he would never need to ask any help from any other bird.

He, with some other English sparrows, had a nice cosy place to sleep. There were some holes in a factory wall which led into a resting

place just above the engine; nothing could have been better for a sleeping place, but O, it was neither comforting nor comfortable to come out of that warm place on a cold morning and find the ground frozen so hard that not a crumb could be picked up anywhere. Although this sparrow that liked to keep to himself noticed that the birds all flew off somewhere and came back looking well fed and happy, he was too proud to follow them and try to see just where they found their food, so there was nothing left for him but to wander about picking a crumb here and there and feeling hungry nearly all the time.

One morning when he came out of his warm sleeping place he found a white world before him. It looked as if some soft, white covering had been let down in the night over everything.

“I shall die now, I know,” he chirped; “not a morsel to eat anywhere in sight.”

When the other sparrows flew away, as they did every morning, he tried to follow them, but

he was so weak from having so little food that he could not keep up with them and they were soon out of sight. He flew along a little farther and then stopped to rest in an apple tree which grew near a large brick house. As he sat there chirping softly to himself and thinking his own sad thoughts he suddenly heard the sparrow voices quite near him, although he could not see them.

“What a good breakfast this is,” he heard next in good plain sparrow talk; “better than ever, it seems this morning.”

“Yes,” said another voice, “that is because the snow has come and covered everything over. These good people know that if they don’t feed us we shall starve to death.”

“And so warm, too. O my, it makes me warm all the way through!”

“Plenty of it, too,” said another, “no need to go hungry.”

This was too much for the cold and hungry sparrow. All his proud resolutions not to be

helped by anyone melted away. He flew down to the ground and hopped in the direction of the sparrows' voices.

He was not long in finding them. They were all safe in a little shed where the snow could not come, and on the ground some kind hand had spread the daintiest breakfast which had ever gladdened a hungry sparrow's stomach. How the little fellow did eat! and after that whenever the breakfast was spread for that hungry flock, the other little fellow which had always kept by himself, was with them.

That was better, wasn't it?



THEIR SUMMER HOME

THEY built it in the top of a great maple tree, where the leaves were the thickest, and no one knew it was there but themselves, for no other eyes but their own had ever seen it.

This maple tree grew so close to the house that the branches swept the roof of the wide front porch which ran all the way around the house.

Two large second story windows fronted on the roof of this porch and there mother and father squirrel came every day to ask for food.

They had the prettiest trick of coming to these windows, standing on their hind feet with their dainty front paws held up in front of them and looking so wistfully for the walnuts which they thought they ought to have

whenever they came after them. They would try first one window and then the other, seeming to feel so sure that they would not be left long without the dainty morsel they loved so well, then when a cracked black walnut was given them they would hold it in their cunning



Mother and Father Squirrel

little paws and pick the kernels out with their sharp white teeth.

If uncracked walnuts were given them they would quickly run off with them and bury them in the ground.

Someone who professed to know all about

squirrels said that they did that to let the shells soften so that they could crack them more easily, but for this I cannot vouch. Although I have seen them many times dig holes in the ground to bury their nuts, just as a dog buries a bone, yet I have never seen one dig up a nut.

Everyone wondered why the squirrels stayed around that maple tree so much. One day someone said,

“I believe the squirrels have a nest in that tree.” Then someone else said, “O, no, squirrels don’t build nests in green trees, but in holes in hollow stumps and such places.”

By and by two little ones were seen with the old ones and when these were nearly grown they also came to be fed. Then it seemed more than ever as if there must be a nest in the big maple tree, but still the wise people said,

“No, squirrels don’t build nests in branches of trees.”

In spite of the wise ones, however, we couldn’t help wondering why they were in the

tree so much. They would sleep there spread out on the branches and look so comfortable and happy and as if they owned the tree.

So the summer passed, and we enjoyed our little friends to the full. October came, the sharp winds blew and soon the beautiful yellow maple leaves began to fall.

One morning after the wind had been blowing furiously all night, we found our beautiful maple tree standing cold and naked, not a single limb wearing a dress of leaves, and there, at the very tip top, what do you suppose we saw?

The squirrels' nest. It was so very different from any birds' nest, that we knew we could not mistake it. In the first place it was not round, as are all birds' nests, but was oblong and boxlike in shape and was more than four times as large as a robin's nest. We could also see that it was built of much coarser material than birds ever use.

We have always been sorry that we did not

take its picture so that you could see just how their cosy summer home looks, and then too, if the picture were only here, you could say, "I know squirrels do build nests in trees for I have seen a picture of one of their nests."

But this, I am sure, was only their summer home, for they had left it for some other place even before we discovered it and only came now and then to the window for food. Did they come back to the same nest next summer? How I wish I knew, but when the next summer came we were far away from that beautiful maple tree, and we never heard anything about our summer friends.



“JUST LIKE FOLKS”

SUCH a time in Cooptown! Where is Cooptown? Well, it is two wooden chicken coops on the east side of the barn where the hot afternoon sun cannot reach them. During the long summer day they lie over on their backs and are of no use to anyone, and Cooptown is very still and quiet.

But when the sun hangs so low in the west that you can barely see the rim of it, then Betsy and Sally, two motherly old hens, come “cluck-cluck-clucking” home from the fields, with their young broods, where they have been busy all day scratching for worms and chasing bugs and flies for themselves and their little ones.

When Jane hears that “cluck-cluck-cluck-

ing” she comes from the house, turns the coops forward and puts sticks or stones under the edges so that there is room for Mrs. Betsy and Mrs. Sally to walk into their coops, call their babies together, and settle down for the night.

But on this night that I am telling about Jane had scattered a little more grain under Betsy’s coop than she had under Sally’s.

I am sorry to tell you that Sally was a very greedy old mother hen and she always wanted the most and the best of everything. So what did she do but walk into Betsy’s coop instead of her own. Jane, thinking that Sally wanted to trade homes with Betsy, turned the coop down over her and so shut her in.

Then the fuss began. Sally raged around inside the coop like a wild hen, clucking and scolding in her very best style, while Betsy tore around outside the coop, making quite as much noise over being shut out of her own home as Sally did over being shut in a home that was not hers.



She Broke Away From Jane's Hands

Jane took hold of Betsy, for she was as tame as a hen could be, and tried to push her into Sally's coop where there was plenty to eat. But this did not suit Betsy at all. She broke away from Jane's hands, stormed around outside her own coop and puffed out her red feathers until she was twice her natural size.

Finally Jane made up her mind that the trade was off, since it seemed to suit neither party, so she lifted Betsy's coop from the ground. Sally walked out, and Betsy walked in, but she strutted around scolding and clucking as though after Sally's presence there, a thorough house-cleaning was needed. At last, after a great deal of scratching and several turnings around in the shallow hole in which she sat every night, she seemed to make up her mind that she had straightened things out enough so that it was like home once more.

Sally had gone into her own coop and had quickly cuddled down in her corner as though she had never been out of it.

At last the babies were safely gathered into their own coops and all was quiet again in "Cooptown."

"Well, I declare," said Jane, with a long sigh, "if fowls aren't just like folks!"



“WHAT HAPPENED?”

AN old gray rat lived in a barn and feasted on the horse feed which was kept in a large open box.

One morning when he went to this box to get his breakfast he found nothing there for him. This had happened before, but as the box had always been filled up very soon he did not worry but ran around on the barn floor, thinking that the owner of the barn would come in soon with more food. But this time the food did not come and poor Mr. Rat grew so hungry at last that he left the barn, hoping to find something to eat in the barnyard. But not a crumb could he pick up.

As he was running along past a high board fence he suddenly spied through a hole some

tiny creatures running around on the other side of the fence.

"They are little things," he said to himself, "and I am sure I can catch one."



I Am Sure to Catch One

So in a minute he had run through the hole, caught up a little yellow chicken and made off to his nest under the barn.

This was all very well for his breakfast, but in a few hours he was hungry again and, as

the feed-box was still empty, he ran to the hole in the fence.

Yes, there were the dainty, little creatures running around on the grass, but this time a bigger creature was with the little ones and seemed to be calling to them every minute with a funny noise in her throat. Mr. Rat was not afraid of the old mother, however. He thought himself a match for anything except a man, a cat, or a dog, and a few times in his life he had been too much even for these. So he went boldly through the hole and came swiftly and silently up behind the plumpest chick in the lot.

Then something struck him, he didn't know what. His head was pecked, his back was nipped, his eye was dug into; in short he seemed to have something pouncing upon him which was worse than a dozen cats. He tried to fight back but it was no use. At last he managed to tear away from the sharp claws and the hard beak, and making a quick run

he found himself safely back in the shelter of the barn.

Did he have any more chickens to eat? Not he. He had lost all taste for the dainty flesh.

Sometimes he peeped through the crack, but the big bunch of feathers all snowy white was always right there on hand, with its soft "cluck, cluck," and as soon as Mr. Rat caught sight of her he ran away from that hole just as fast as ever he could go.

Wise old rat, was he not? He did not mean to be caught twice in the same way, and in that I think he was wiser than some boys and girls that I have heard about.

THE TRAP

ONE day in the middle of a cold Michigan winter, a kind-hearted boy was roaming about in the woods on his father's farm, when he heard a cry which sounded like an animal in trouble of some sort.

The boy at once began searching around very carefully, to find just where the sound came from. After a long time he found snuggled down in a big hollow log a poor little baby fox. There was no other animal of any kind in sight, and the poor little fox was not only shivering with cold but seemed too weak to stand alone.

“You poor little fellow,” said the tender-hearted boy, taking him up in his arms and snuggling him down under his warm coat;



The Fox's Little House

“how I wish I could know just where your mother is, I would take you to her this very minute.”

The little fellow seemed well suited with his new shelter and his crying soon ceased altogether. The boy stood for a few minutes near the empty log, hoping that the mother would appear, but everything was quiet and as far as he could see there was no sign of any living creature but himself and the baby fox, so he turned about and went off home as fast as his smart young feet could carry him.

As soon as he had reached his comfortable home the fox was given some warm milk to drink and then a nice warm bed was made for him in a corner of the cow stable.

“Now,” said the boy, “we will have some good times getting acquainted with each other.”

And so they did. The boy spent all of his leisure time with the fox and he soon learned to know his young master from the rest of the

family. He would come to him when called and would follow him around like a dog. Mr. Fox grew fast too, and by the time spring had come, he was full grown. Then trouble began. His fond young master found out that he was a real *fox*, for he began catching and eating the fat little chickens just like any bad wild fox who had to catch his own living wherever he could find it. This, you may be sure, made his young master very sad, for he said to himself, "Now they will kill my dear little pet."

But nothing of the kind happened. Instead, the boy's father paid a carpenter a great many dollars to build a nice house for Mr. Fox to live in. He built it with a peaked roof, two imitation windows and a real little door which could be shut up as closely as yours or mine.

Then a nice new collar was bought for Mr. Fox's neck, and a long steel chain was fastened to the collar and the other end was caught in a big staple which was driven into the fox's house. So you see, Mr. Fox was made all warm

and “comfy,” but he couldn’t get away to catch any more of old mother hen’s dear, little, fluffy chickens. He seemed to know that they had managed to spoil his fun, for he would run out to the full length of his chain, then lie down and look with such longing eyes at the little chicks running around just safely beyond his reach. Sometimes the little chicks would come pretty close to the fox to pick up the dainty bits that he had left lying about, but as soon as they went too near the old hen would cluck her loudest to call them away from the danger.

Then one day a queer thing happened. When the boy brought the fox’s dinner to him, instead of eating it up as fast as he could, as he usually did, he took his cunning little paws and scraped the dinner into a nice heap not very far from the door of his house. The boy’s mother, who was working beside the pantry window, saw him doing this and made up her mind that Foxie was getting ready for some mischief, so she kept her eyes on him. After

the dinner was all put together in a neat little pile, Mr. Fox pulled all the sticks and weeds and whatever stuff he could reach into another neat little pile and shoved it up in front of the door of his house. Then he crawled into his house behind the nice screen that he had fixed so cunningly, pulling all the sticks and other stuff close up against the open door.

Now you will see, I trust, that everything looked all right; there was no sign of the fox anywhere, just that pretty little mound in front of his door. So the chickens began coming closer and closer to the door, although the old mother hen clucked her loudest. She was not cheated by the trap he had so cunningly laid, and she said just as plainly as she could, "Better keep away, better keep away."

But I suppose those wise little chicks said to each other:

"O, mother is so fussy! There is no harm there. Just see how quiet and safe everything is; it is just as safe there as it is here, and all

that lovely dinner going to waste, when we are nearly starving for something good to eat besides bugs and flies."

Then one of the chickens, bolder than any of the others, went right up to the good dinner and began to eat. It had taken only two or three mouthfuls when, dash, pounce, out came that bad fox through that nice little screen and caught the tender chick in his cruel paws. If the mother who was watching from the pantry hadn't made a few quick jumps and hit the bad fox with a big stick, there would have been one less chick in the yard.

After that they took great care to keep Mr. Fox's yard swept clean of sticks and rubbish of all kinds, so that he never again had a chance to fix up a cunning trap.

GRIP

BRADY was an old soldier, who stopped one day at Kimley farmhouse, that comfortable place where there was always plenty to eat. When they found that the poor old soldier had no home, but stayed wherever he could get work to do, they took him in to “do the chores.”

When he had been at the Kimley farm about six months, he was taken ill with the “grip,” but they gave him such good care that he grew better, and one day when he was sitting up for the first time, one of the hired men came into his room, saying:

“I’m bringing you a caller, Mr. Brady, he just came to the back door and asked to come in.”

Mr. Brady looked around, and there stood a big, half starved shepherd dog.

“Poor fellow, we’ll call him ‘Grip’,” said Mr. Brady, reaching out his thin hand to pat the dog on the head, “I am sure he’s a very wise dog, since he knew enough to stop at a good place; you and I, Grip, will be good friends, I know.”

And so it proved. The days rolled into months and months into years, and Mr. Brady and Grip stayed on at the Kimley farm and loved each other more and more.

No one ever came to claim kindred to the man, or ownership of the dog, and nothing was ever known of their former lives: the man wouldn’t tell his story and the dog couldn’t tell his.

Ten years passed away thus, then something happened. Mr. Kimley brought home a handsome St. Bernard dog.

“Grip is growing old,” he said, “and we must have another dog to take his place.”

Grip resented this very much. He barked at the new-comer, snapped at him, and would not share his meals with him.

One cold evening he was so very surly to the St. Bernard, refusing to make room for him before the fire, that Mr. Brady lost his temper and for the first time in his life he boxed Grip's ears. With a low whine Grip immediately slunk off to the door, which was opened by one of the men, and the poor fellow was seen no more that night.

When the whole of the next day passed and Grip did not appear, Mr. Brady was frightened and began to hunt for his old friend.

He finally found him in one of the barns, hidden in the hay-mow. Brady called him in the most loving tones, but Grip refused to obey. So Mr. Brady brought some food out on a plate and, as Grip took no notice of it, he left it there, thinking he would eat it when alone. But when he went again, several hours later, the food was still untouched. This state of things

lasted for several days, the poor dog seeming to fade away before the eyes of his faithful friend. Soon, Mr. Brady also lost his appetite, and became careless and forgetful about his work. Mr. Kimley noticed this, and as he was a very kind man, he said to one of the men one day,

“What is the matter with Brady? I fear he is going to be ill, better get him to take some medicine.”

He was then told all about Grip. He looked very serious, but said nothing. His married daughter, who had been making quite a long visit at her old home, was packing her trunk to leave that day, so he went to the foot of the stairs and called to her,

“Mary, do you want to take the St. Bernard home with you?”

“Indeed, I do,” answered Mary quickly.

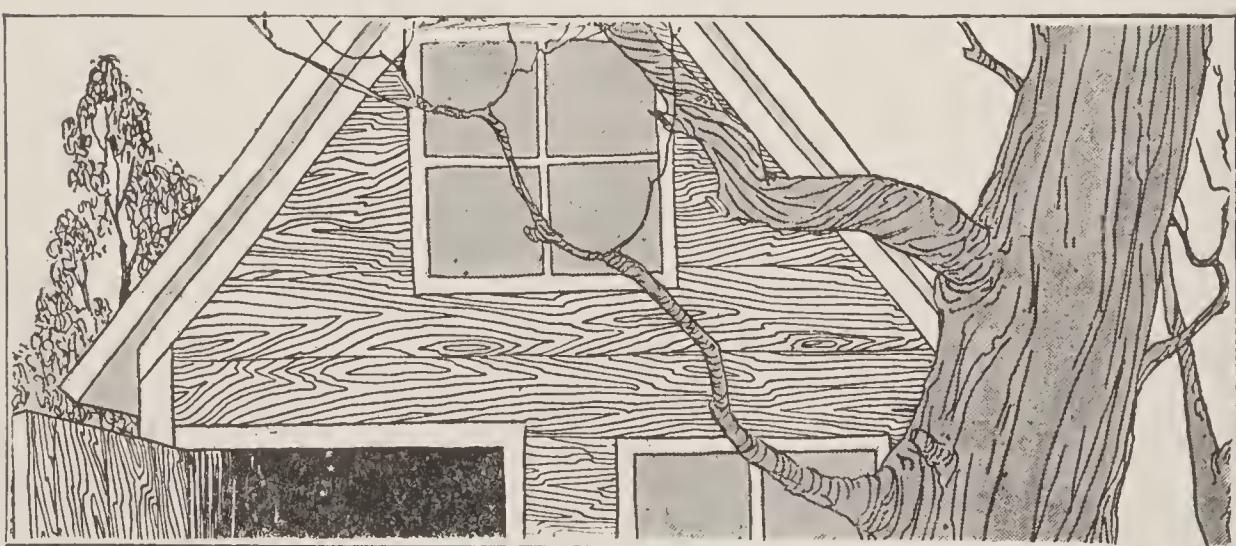
“Very well, then, he is yours,” said her father, “he does not seem to be wanted here.”

But the strangest part of this true story is

that the St. Bernard had not been gone two hours when Grip came dragging himself to the house and gladly ate the food which the maid gave him, wagging his tail every minute.

"Grip, old fellow," said Mr. Kimley, patting him on the head, "we'll wait until you are dead before we bring on your successor."

So the two friends, Mr. Brady and Grip, still live on at the Kimley farm, and although both are what we call "old," the man seventy and the dog at least fifteen or sixteen, they are still leading happy and useful lives together.



THE CAT AND THE SQUIRREL

THEY were less than ten feet apart; the squirrel was on the fence, the cat was on the grape arbor, and if you will stop to think a minute, you will see that the cat was several feet above the squirrel.

You are perhaps wondering how the squirrel could be on the fence when they are supposed to be found only in the woods. But this happened in a town where the squirrels ran about the streets and were almost as tame as the dogs and cats. The cat was holding his head low down to the arbor and he was waving his tail, which was swollen to twice its natural size, angrily back and forth. He looked as if he meant to pounce upon the squirrel in a minute or two and finish him, but the pretty

little squirrel did not seem at all frightened. He sat up in the cunning way they have, his bushy tail spread out behind him and he was scolding away at the cat in his funny chattering talk as if he thought he could frighten the cat to death. They sat thus for a long time, each one seemed waiting for the other to make the first dash. After awhile the squirrel seemed to think it was time to stop scolding and do something. He came down on his fore feet and swept along the fence like a flash. Scat! went the cat from the grape arbor to the fence and away he went after the squirrel almost as fast as he. Not quite though, for before the cat had reached the end of the fence the squirrel was hidden in the thick green leaves of a big maple tree which grew near the end of the fence. The cat paused and looked around surprised, he could hear the saucy squirrel still scolding and chattering but he could not see him.

Now cats can climb trees, as you know, very

well, and I dare say this cat would have gone after the squirrel, but you see he could not take a flying leap into the tree as the squirrel had done, he would have to jump to the ground and then get up the tree. So while he was making up his mind about doing that, what did this saucy squirrel do but come out on a big limb, scold away a minute at the cat, then take another leap into the next tree and then away he went where the cat could not see him any more. Don't you think the reason he was so bold in staying near the cat, was because he knew that no matter how smart the cat might be he could not run and leap from tree to tree as he could?

Did the cat chase the squirrel any farther? No, for he also was smart enough to know that he was no match for those swiftly flying and far-jumping feet.

"I suppose," he said to himself, "I can catch a mouse as well as the best of them, but I don't believe I care very much for squirrels any-

way." So he went back to his home and lay down on the porch looking as happy as though he had never heard of such a creature as a squirrel.

So he was a pretty wise old cat after all, wasn't he?



“PORKY”

NO, this is not a story about a pig, but there is a funny little animal called a porcupine, and hunters have shortened his name into “Porky,” even though he is not in the least like a pig.

We are told by old woodsmen that the Michigan forests were at one time full of these queer little animals. They also tell us that toward spring when the sun begins to shine out and the days grow warmer the little creatures could be heard calling to each other in high, whining voices, just like naughty, fretful children, and then the Indians would say,

“The Porkys are calling, a thaw is coming,” and sure enough, in a few days, the thaw would be on hand, all of the ice and snow would

melt away and all of the people would say, "Spring has come, spring has come!"

The Michigan forests are now fast disappearing and with them must go the little porcupine.

The porcupine is small in size and in shape very much like a raccoon. He has bright, full eyes, and the back and sides of his body are covered with sharp quills, dirty white in color with light brown tips. His tail, which is short and broad, is a good thing for you to keep away from, because with it Mr. Porky can strike a sharp, hard blow, and he can also leave the sharp quills in whatever he strikes. He has sharp teeth with which he peels off the barks of his favorite trees. He does not burrow up, or go to sleep for the winter, but he will live and grow fat where other creatures would starve to death. His favorite food in summer is the green pads of the pond lilies, when he can get them without going too far

into the water. He sleeps high in the trees out of harm's way, just as does the raccoon.

Although the porcupine is slow in his motions and gentle in his disposition, he is by no means a pleasant enemy. When he sees danger ahead he makes himself into a round bunch with his head down and his blunt nose covered by his fore paws. Then his dirty white quills with their light brown, sharp tips stand up all around, so that when seen from the back he looks like a funny ball tied around with a pointed white ruffle. Many a bold dog has learned the sharpness of these quills to its sorrow. One blow from the porcupine's strong, flat tail is enough to send the pluckiest dog away howling with pain and to give his owners a long and tedious job pulling the quills out of the dog's flesh with a pair of tweezers. Three people will be needed for this task, two to hold the dog and one to pull the quills.

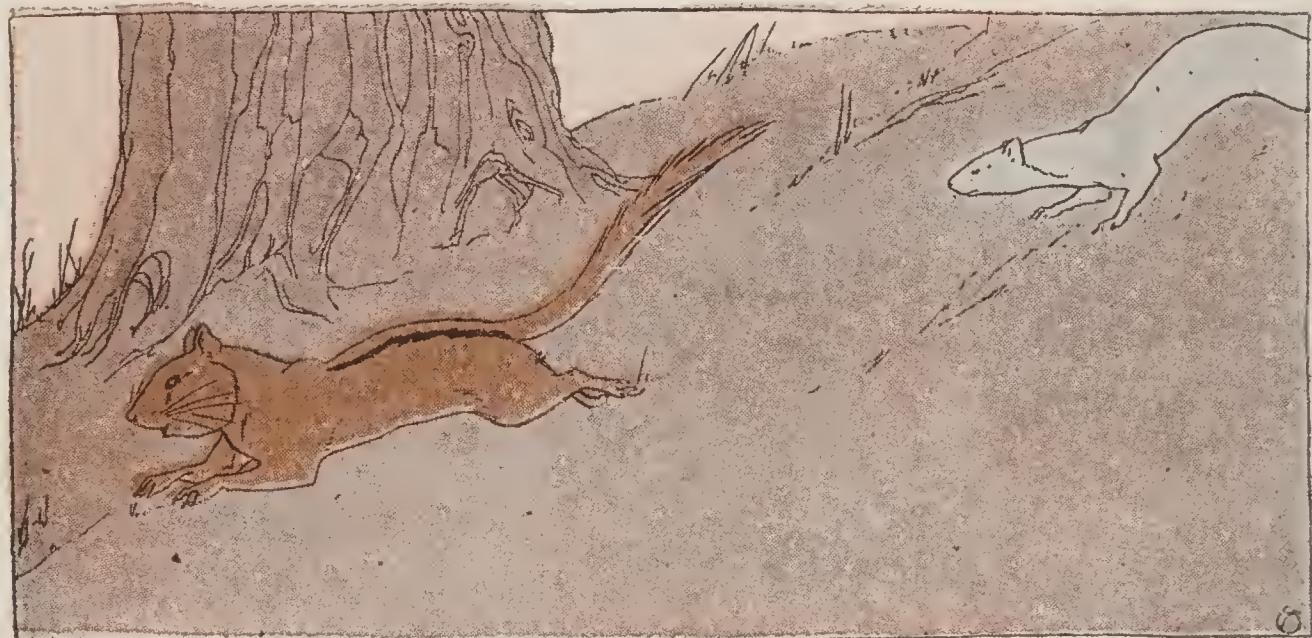
Porcupines have been kept caged, and, as they are greedy little things and take easily to the food of human beings, they will stay quietly through the winter in a cage, but as soon as the spring comes they will gnaw their way out if possible, and take to their beloved and natural home, the woods.

One day a bold Porky wandered into the yard of a lumberman's home in Northern Michigan. He was a funny sight to the children who watched him from the window as he went up and down their croquet ground with his short, mincing steps. He walked just like a girl who is wearing shoes too tight for her. This funny gait is caused by the feet not working themselves, as do those of other animals, but they have to be lifted one at a time, this giving to the animal a side-wise motion. This funny gait was amusing the children very much and the porcupine was doing no harm, but the hired man thought he ought to be killed; just what his reasons were for this

opinion we never found out. So, as the hired man happened to have an umbrella in his hand, he began to pound poor Porky with all his might with the umbrella. This did not harm Mr. Porky at all, except to rob him of a few quills, which he could easily spare. The children called to the hired man with all their might to let the porcupine alone, but he chased him out of the yard and he jumped into a creek near by, which as the porcupine hates water he very seldom does, and so he escaped the hired man, much to the delight of the children.

THE WEASEL AND THE CHIPMUNK

ONE bright spring morning the woods rang with the sound of axes, for several men were cutting down the great oak trees.



Ran a Fat Little Chipmunk

Suddenly, almost under the feet of the men, ran a fat little chipmunk, and in hot chase after it, came a slim, white weasel, so close

that it seemed as if he must catch the chipmunk. If he had caught it do you know what would have happened? He would have taken the chipmunk by the throat and sucked the little creature's blood until its life was gone. The men knew this, and so to save the chipmunk, one of them threw a great club at the weasel, and although it was not hit, it darted off in a different direction from that taken by the chipmunk.

But then a strange thing happened, the chipmunk, instead of disappearing, as had the weasel, came back to the spot where the men were working and played around among the brush piles and leaves until the men went home to dinner.

Was the little creature wise enough to know that it was among friends? Or could it, by any chance, have had a nest somewhere among the brush piles? I have wondered a great deal about the action of this chipmunk, for, you

must know, this is something which really happened and not a made-up story.

What do you think was the reason the chipmunk stayed so long with the men?



THE CAT AND THE BLUE JAYS

ONE summer some blue jays built a nest in the bushes which grew near the home of a big black cat. During the time of nest building and egg hatching the cat paid no attention to the old birds.

At last came the young birds, then they, after many days, began to try their wings and made several short flights without any accident.

One unlucky day one of these little fellows thought that he was now strong enough to take a longer flight. He spread his wings and started for a big oak tree quite far away, where his mother sat preening her feathers. He was half way there, and I'm sure his little bird

heart was beating gladly, when alas, down he went on the ground.

The big, black cat had been patiently waiting and watching for this very time, and she had her paw firmly on the little bird the moment it touched the grass. But the old birds were watching too, and down they swooped close to the cat's head. Their loud cries frightened the cat so much that, although she kept her paw on the bird's head she could not harm him, she was so busy watching the old birds. They circled around and around the cat as if meaning any moment to peck her eyes out, and all the while they kept up their wild cries.

At last the people in the house heard their cries and, as they knew Madame Puss very well, they came running out to see what was going on, and they did not need to look twice. The man siezed a croquet mallet and ran at the cat. This was too much for her, it was even worse than the screeching birds, for there was some slight chance of catching one of them,

even in spite of their provoking wings, but she well knew that she was no match for that big stick when in her master's hands.

So she took her paw off the poor little bird, and ran as fast as she could until she was safely stowed away under the porch, where she knew no one could reach her.

Then the little bird, none the worse for its few moments' lying under the cat's paw, except that its feathers were somewhat ruffled, flew back again to the home bush.

Several hours after this the owners of the cat saw a funny sight. She came slowly from her hiding place under the porch and walking slyly across the lawn, jumped upon a rustic seat which stood directly under the bush where the jays lived. This was the cat's favorite resting place, and she had spent most of her daylight hours, since the coming of the warm weather, sleeping on this bench. But now all was changed, she had no sooner placed herself there, than there was a terrible commotion

from the old birds: they came at the cat just as they had done before, circling close to her head and giving their terrible cries of distress. The cat's face was a picture of fear, though she would, now and then, make a frantic, but useless, dash at the birds with her paws. They kept up this attack until at last strong, fierce and cunning as was the cat, she was fairly frightened away. When she jumped from the bench and started toward the house they flew after her, chasing her to the very threshold of the door.

From that time until the young birds had flown away there was no more peace for the cat on the lawn. The moment she appeared the birds flew at her, as before, and drove her out of sight. And yet, this is the strangest part of this true story, they had not seemed to know of the cat's existence until she had tried to catch one of the young birds; and now, who shall say that birds have no memory?

JUMBO AND THE PAIL

THE little Scotch terrier stood on the porch and sniffed the cool morning air, he was very hungry, for the careless cook had forgotten to give him his breakfast, and, as he stood there, he was wondering where he should go for something to eat.

Pretty soon he caught the scent of cooked meat, and so off he trotted to find it. Down the veranda steps, across the lawn and up the street he went, for his black little nose was telling him where to go.

When he came to a large brick house with a smooth, well-kept lawn in front of it, he turned about and trotted up the stone walk which led to the rear of the house. At the foot of the back steps was an old tin pail, and down in the very

bottom of that pail were three big bones which had not been picked clean.

Jumbo, in spite of his big sounding name, was a very little fellow and it was a long way to the bottom of the pail.

However, little as he was, he did not mean to be balked by a trifle, now that the meat was within sight, if not within reach. So the next thing he did was to put his two little paws on the rim of the pail, and as it was very light in weight, having so little in it, but one thing could happen; it tipped over. This suited Jumbo exactly, and he thrust his shaggy head into the pail and set his white teeth on the biggest bone.

But, O dear! when he tried to draw his head out of the pail, so that he might eat his tidbit in comfort, he found that his head did not come out of the pail as easily as it had gone into it. He was much surprised to find the battered old pail hanging on to his neck, and he at once began to shake his head as hard and as fast

as he could. But this did not help him at all, he only banged the pail around on the stone walk, making a great clatter without in the least helping him to be free. He couldn't know, poor little fellow, that a broken and jagged piece of the tin had caught in his collar and was holding the old tin pail fast around his neck.

Pretty soon he began to bark, for by this time he was angry. As he was only a little Scotch terrier, he didn't know any better than to think the pail was to blame for his trouble, nothing of the kind had ever happened to him before and, so, of course, he couldn't understand it at all.

As his head was inside of the pail, his bark sounded so queer that the people in the house ran to the window to learn the cause of the strange noise. Then they saw a very funny sight, a tin pail bobbing around with only half of a dog to be seen, and part of the time, it was hard to tell which was pail and which was dog.

Presently a little girl who was looking out of the window, made up her mind what the trouble was and she said,

“I’m going out to help the poor little dog.”

As she came running down the steps, the dog, who had been teased a great deal by bad children, was in such a fright that he shook his head harder than ever, throwing himself and the old pail around so much that the jagged end of tin was broken loose and the battered old bucket rolled off into the corner.

Jumbo did not stop to look after it, you may be sure, he was so glad to be free that he even seemed to forget the bones which he had been trying so hard to get.

The strangest part of this little story is that, although Jumbo had been in the habit of coming every day to pick food out of the old pail, he was never seen in that back yard again.

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COMICAL CIRCUS STORIES

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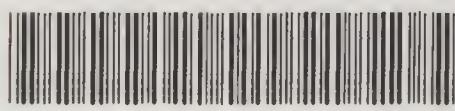
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